

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
MISSOURI, SOUTHEASTERN DIVISION

Dalvin D. Lawrence v. Ripley County Sheriff's Office, et al.

Lawrence · No. 1:25-cv-00106-PLC · Decided November 25, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri granted Dalvin D. Lawrence leave to proceed in forma pauperis and assessed an initial partial filing fee of \$1. The court dismissed the § 1983 action without prejudice because the named county entities were not suable entities, the complaint did not allege municipal liability, and it stated no plausible claim against the bank or any identifiable individual defendant. The court also certified that an appeal would not be taken in good faith.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, Southeastern Division
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, Southeastern Division
DECIDED	November 25, 2025
DOCKET	1:25-cv-00106-PLC
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The court screened a prisoner's pro se civil-rights complaint filed in forma pauperis and dismissed the action without prejudice for failure to state a claim.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed the in forma pauperis complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2), accepting well-pleaded factual allegations as true, disregarding legal conclusions and conclusory assertions, and liberally construing the pro se pleading to determine whether it stated a facially plausible claim for relief.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Dalvin D. Lawrence v. Ripley County Sheriff's Office, Ripley County Detention Center, People's Community Bank

TOPICS

section 1983

prisoners rights

pleadings

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil rights

prisoner civil rights

federal civil procedure

in forma pauperis proceedings

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint stated a plausible claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against the Ripley County Sheriff's Office and Ripley County Detention Center.
2. Whether the complaint alleged facts sufficient to impose municipal liability under Monell.
3. Whether the complaint stated a claim against People's Community Bank when the complaint merely listed the bank as a defendant.
4. Whether the allegations concerning medical care, discrimination, religious treatment, visitation, recreation, property, sexual harassment, and assault stated plausible claims for relief.
5. Whether Plaintiff was entitled to proceed in forma pauperis and an initial partial filing fee under 28 U.S.C. § 1915.

HOLDINGS

1. The court granted Plaintiff's most recent application to proceed in forma pauperis and assessed an initial partial filing fee of \$1, while denying the earlier duplicative applications as moot.
2. The court dismissed the complaint without prejudice because it failed to state a plausible claim for relief and did not identify a non-frivolous basis for proceeding.
3. The claims against the Ripley County Sheriff's Office and Ripley County Detention Center failed as a matter of law because local-government departments or subdivisions are not juridical entities subject to suit under § 1983.
4. Even if the complaint were construed as naming the relevant municipality, it failed to state a municipal-liability claim because it alleged no official policy, unofficial custom, or deliberately indifferent failure to train or supervise.
5. The complaint failed to state a claim against People's Community Bank or any unidentified individual or entity because it alleged no specific conduct by the bank and no sufficient facts establishing liability for the other referenced events.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"Therefore, Plaintiff's claims against those entities fail as a matter of law." (Section IV)

"The Court therefore finds that the complaint fails to state a claim against People's Community Bank."
(Section IV)

"IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this action is DISMISSED without prejudice." (Order)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Lawrence alleged that, while detained, he was placed in isolation, denied visits and recreation, denied medical attention for neck and back problems, subjected to racial and religious discrimination and antisemitic slurs, fed pork despite religious objections, and subjected to property damage, assault, and ignored sexual-harassment or PREA complaints. He named the Ripley County Sheriff's Office, the Ripley County Detention Center, and People's Community Bank as defendants, but provided no specific allegations tying People's Community Bank to misconduct and no facts identifying responsible individual defendants or establishing municipal policy, custom, or deliberate indifference.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a complaint under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and multiple applications to proceed in forma pauperis. After denying the first application without prejudice, the court granted the most recent application, assessed a \$1 initial partial filing fee, denied the earlier applications as moot, and dismissed the complaint without further proceedings under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2).

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Henderson v. Norris, 129 F.3d 481, 484 (8th Cir. 1997)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678-79 (2009)
- Barton v. Taber, 820 F.3d 958, 964 (8th Cir. 2016)
- Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972)
- Solomon v. Petray, 795 F.3d 777, 787 (8th Cir. 2015)
- Martin v. Aubuchon, 623 F.2d 1282, 1286 (8th Cir. 1980)
- Stone v. Harry, 364 F.3d 912, 914-15 (8th Cir. 2004)
- McNeil v. United States, 508 U.S. 106, 113 (1993)
- Ketchum v. City of West Memphis, Ark., 974 F.2d 81, 82 (8th Cir. 1992)
- Ballard v. Missouri, Case No. 4:13-cv-528-JAR (E.D. Mo. Apr. 22, 2013)
- Wallace v. St. Louis City Justice Ctr., Case No. 4:12-cv-2291-JAR (E.D. Mo. July 17, 2013)
- Monell v. Department of Social Services of City of New York, 436 U.S. 658, 691 (1978)
- Potter v. Clark, 497 F.2d 1206, 1207 (7th Cir. 1974)
- Morris v. Craddock, 954 F.3d 1055, 1058 (8th Cir. 2020)